<u>IN THE CLAIMS</u>:

The claims pending, are as follows:

1.    (Previously Presented) An image search apparatus which searches for an image, the apparatus comprising:

image storage means for storing a plurality of images;

region information storage means for storing partial images included in the respective images stored in said image storage means in correspondence with the respective images;

region feature storage means for storing features of the partial images stored in said region information storage means in correspondence with the respective partial images;

receiving means for receiving a feature as a search query;

search means for searching for an image including the partial image which contains a feature corresponding to the search query; and

search result display means for displaying a searched image, enlarging the partial image corresponding to the search query in the searched image, and composing the enlarged partial image onto the displayed searched image.

2.    (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein when a plurality of searched images are obtained on the basis of a search result, said search result display means displays reduced images of the plurality of searched images in the form of a list.

3. to 4.    (Cancelled)


5.    (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said search result display means composes a plurality of partial images while maintaining a relative positional relationship between the plurality of partial images, if said search means searches the searched image having the plurality of partial images which contain the feature.


6.    (Cancelled)


7.    (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein sizes of the plurality of partial images are unified to a predetermined size.


8. to 12.    (Cancelled)


13.    (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the apparatus further comprises switching means for switching display of a plurality of searched images in said search result display means, and

said search result display means alternately displays the plurality of searched images at the same position one by one on the basis of a switching instruction from said switching means.


14.    (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1,

wherein said search result display means displays the searched image in an area with a predetermined size.

15.     (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said search result display means displays a circumscribed rectangular image surrounding each partial image searched out by said search means.

16.     (Cancelled)

17.     (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the region feature storage means stores, as a feature of the image, at least one of concept information expressing a concept obtained from the partial image, text information expressing the concept of the partial image, and an image feature expressing a feature of the partial image.

18.     (Previously Presented) An image search method for an image search apparatus which can be connected to

an image storage unit which stores a plurality of images,

a region information storage unit which stores partial images included in the respective images stored in said image storage unit in correspondence with the respective images, and

a region feature storage unit which stores features of the partial images stored in said region information storage unit in correspondence with the respective partial images, said method comprising:

a receiving step of receiving a feature as a search query;

a search step of searching for an image including the partial image which contains a feature corresponding to the search query; and

a search result display step of displaying a searched image, enlarging the partial image corresponding to the search query in the searched image, and composing the enlarged partial image onto the displayed searched image.

19. to 21.    (Cancelled)

22.    (Previously Presented) A computer readable recording medium storing a program for causing a computer, which can be connected to

an image storage unit which stores a plurality of images,

a region information storage unit which stores partial images included in the respective images stored in said image storage unit in correspondence with the respective images, and

a region feature storage unit which stores features of the partial images in said region information storage unit in correspondence with the respective partial images, the program causing the computer to execute:

a receiving step of receiving a feature as a search query;

a search step of searching for an image including the partial image which contains a feature corresponding to the search query; and

a search result display step of displaying a searched image, enlarging the partial image corresponding to the search query in the searched image, and composing the enlarged partial image onto the displayed searched image.